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LIVERY OF LONDON.

At the Anniversary Dinner of the Livery of London, Friends to Parliamentary Reform, held at the City of London Tavern, on Saturday, May 9,

ROBERT WATHMAN, Esq. in the chair,
It was unanimously agreed to publish the following declaration.

That the experience of all ages demonstrates that public Liberty is the basis of the prosperity of nations.

That in Britain, the main-spring and security of Liberty, is the controul of the Representatives of the People in the House of Commons.

That if that House does not truly represent some independent bodies of electors, in the just sense of representation, it ceases to answer its constitutional purposes as a controul on the executive government, and as a guardian on the liberties of the people.

That such deviation from its legitimate purposes appears in the construction of the present House of Commons;—326 members being returned by 182 individuals, and upwards of seventy placemen

having seats in the house, besides various means of corruption influencing other members.

That further evidence of the necessity of restoring a full, fair, and free representation of the people in that house is afforded by the present amount of our public debt—by the enormous and arbitrary collection of taxes, by the frequency and duration of wars, by the wasteful and profligate expenditure of the public money, and by a systematic contempt of public opinion.

That disregarding all attempts to misrepresent our motives and objects, we feel ourselves peculiarly called upon in the present perilous situation of the country, to persevere in our efforts towards obtaining a restoration of the Constitution, the chief excellency of which lies in its representative system; and we therefore earnestly invite our fellow-subjects at large, to concur with us, by firm, peaceable, and constitutional means, in endeavouring to accomplish so great, salutary, and necessary an object.

ROBERT WATHMAN, Chairman.

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF POLITICS.

WERE we less interested in her fortunes, and her fall, we should say, that Great Britain, at the present moment, exhibits a singular, not to say a whimsical spectacle. "Magna Civitas, et Misera" So great a display of external power, with such bitter manifestation of domestic distress—such ostentatious exultation in "the glorious captures" of the war, such real captivity in the concerns of commerce—language so dictatorial on the necessity of war, so imperatively declared by the *State*, with such wretchedness, or (in the lank language of Scotland,) such "starvation" in the *Society* at large—so many boasts of being "the acknowledged champion of the liberties and independence of Europe," with such a greedy look-

ing out for the means of sustenance from the Baltic—a navy, the triumphant monarch of the ocean, yet scarcely able to find a friendly port in the extent of Europe or North America—patriotic funds subscribing tens and hundreds of thousands for heroic efforts in war, and soup-societies (as in Spitalfields) providing for 7000 people in one day, 3000 looms unemployed, an equal number in half employ, and three or four persons depending on each loom for daily bread—a national expenditure of nearly 100 millions of money, while petitions from a miserable population are pouring into a House where the members declaim "on the happiness of the people," and pronounce it "a full, fair, and free representation" of that people,

when 182 individuals return by nomination, or otherwise, 326 members, when above 70 placemen occupy seats in the house of the people, and thus the majority is returned by a smaller number of persons, than the majority of the house itself consisted of ; a people groaning under heavy taxation, while two fat men are receiving the interest of one million, as tellers of the military expenditure, exceeding the united pensions of Nelson, Wellington, Duncan, Hutchinson, and St. Vincent, and while another decrepit man gets £.2000 a-year for bundling up state papers with red and green tape, and thus strengthening the hands of the executive power half a million of money expended in raising barracks near the commercial towns, as Liverpool, Bristol, &c and thus transferring them into military stations, in order to conform to a military taste in a family, which is to become, therefore, the tone of administration, and its leading rule of conduct —In fine, with a population of above 40 millions to oppose, and at the same time doing every thing to alienate four millions of our own population, on account of their religious doctrines, in many respects the same of the church of England, while another portion of the empire, with a system of religion altogether different from that of the same church, is petted and patronized ; thus suffering one wing of the empire to flutter at perfect liberty, and clipping the other wing close, by the shears of toleration, if not to the quick, if not to draw the blood, yet certainly to incapacitate it altogether from rising, and, with it, the *Body itself* from rising to its natural, and now necessary elevation.—Shall we laugh, or shall we weep at such a heap of incongruities, such a collection of contrasts ?

There has certainly happened a most unfortunate concurrence of na-

tural and artificial calamity, in the want of trade, and consequent want of employment conspiring with a want of provision. The latter seems to have been general throughout Europe, and to have been experienced even in Sicily, formerly the granary of Italy, and which might still continue as fruitful as it was in ancient times, if the country were not cursed with a government, more to be dreaded than the eruptions of Etna. Agriculture is the true basis of secure prosperity, and commerce is the precarious supplement of national wealth. The *machinery* which augments the product of manufactures to such a surprising degree, and increases foreign trade by the greater cheapness of the articles, may turn out a national mischief, whenever the superfluity thus created beyond the necessities and call of home-consumption, is prevented by the unnatural state of things war always produces, from its usual exit, and customary foreign circulation. The Nile then rises too high. The works of man are drowned in the deluge, rather than benefited, as usual, by the divinity of the blessed river.

Commerce ought to *irrigate*, but never stagnate. The boasted *machinery* of Britain may thus, in one sense, be said to render her subsidiary and subservient to her customers in Europe. They may, as they have done, combine so as necessarily to occasion a glut in the home market. This, in its re-action, throws all the frame of human society into disorder, choaks all its wheels, passes with insufferable weight from one grade or rank to an inferior, and at length upon the lowest; from master, and employer, down to the operative class, which, at length, unable to bear the incumbent pressure, attempts to throw off the weight by a violent effort, by riot and *convulsion*.

Although then it appears certain, that in such particular circumstances as occur at present, *Machinery* itself may be an indirect cause of the national distress, (all classes of a commercial state so closely sympathising,) by supplying so much more of product than is needful, and thus causing a stagnation of capital; yet, it may perhaps be added, that, in *all* cases, there seems a limited period of time, when the invention of so many *artificial* hands bears as a heavy hardship upon the *human* hands in former full employment. This period is, in some cases, shorter than in others, particularly where there is a great demand for human labour in a variety of occupations, or where the manufacturer has only to make a small change of the *mode*, rather than of the *kind* of labour; as from the weaving of linen to that of cotton. But still, in all such cases, industry is, for a time, shorter or longer, set a-drift. *For this time*, the handicraft man folds his arms, casts his eyes upon his wife and children, and then, in a sudden burst of anger, is inclined to vent his fury upon what he deems the immediate cause of his sufferings, the *machinery*; much in the same manner (for outrageous passion renders all animals alike) as the dog, faithful and kind-hearted in general, worries the stone which is thrown at him, the proximate cause of the blow which he feels, with such anguish.

A government that looked at all to the consequences of things, and was not entirely absorbed in one over-ruling idea, might have forecasted such a state of affairs as has happened. When it was said by authority, some months ago, in Parliament, that the distress of the manufacturing portion of society was acknowledged, as a fact, a terrible truism, but, notwithstanding, no

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adequate remedy *could* be administered, then such evils might and ought to have been anticipated, by men who are raised to an elevated station in society, for the sole purpose of commanding a wider prospect of the public interests.

It is not at such times to say, "live horse," &c., without giving the means of living. It is not by lively illustrations of the state of the rival countries, and a comparison with two men struggling, which would hold out longest with their heads in a bucket of water*, that a people can be comforted or encouraged to a prosecution of the war. It was the duty of administration to have known the state and condition of the people *at this time*, as at all times, without being instructed by petitions, still more without being impelled into committees of inquiry, by riots and assassinations, which not only disgrace the character of the country, but more deeply impeach the improvidence and infatuation of ministers themselves. In the chain of causes and effects, what link is formed by administration itself? An aggrieved individual, an aggrieved class of the community, ought always to be listened to with sympathy, and even with respect. Often repelled and disappointed, human nature, the same in all places, in Ireland or in England, has its limit of suffering, and most stable is that government, which can most truly calculate how far that limit extends, where reason is lost, and madness commences.

The whole Empire has been much surprised and shocked by the assassination of Mr. Perceval, naturally forgetting all party distinctions, all political animosities in the sympathies of humanity for the moral

* See the petition from Liverpool, on this subject, at page 491.

and well-mannered man, the husband, and the Father. The atrocious act seems to have been perpetrated on motives of private revenge, without accomplice or participation, by a person whose mind had brooded over disappointment, till it worked itself to a state bordering on insanity, and "with systematic correctness," often found to accompany insanity, contrived and perpetrated deliberate murder.

Mr. Perceval's death will probably occasion only a personal, not a political change in the measures of administration. The Prime Ministers of Britain, perhaps unconsciously to themselves, have been long, but secondary instruments in the machinery of the state. They are selected by an invisible and irresponsible influence, as being possessed of those ostensible qualifications best fitted to fulfil the purposes of the *Interior*. Pitt himself was placed upon the Tripod by the invisible priests within the temple. A corrupt influence made its use of an incorruptible man, incorruptible by love of gold, but accessible by love of power. They instilled the mephitic gas which blew up all his inspiration;—for with all his pride and tenaciousness of office, he was only ostensible minister, and he sacrificed his virgin fame, his hereditary character, his glorious opportunities, his great accomplishments, his health, and his life, for a *seeming* to rule the British Empire.

Mr. Perceval was then *retained*, as having abilities, professional and personal, adequate to the decent, dogged discharge of official and parliamentary duties—abilities that might serve to show the world, although Lord Sidmouth had not gone before him, what a moderate quantum of talent, exposed on the hot-bed of the Treasury Bench,

shoots into a sufficiency for the station of Minister, *always provided* that such talents be accompanied with the *indispensable* devotion to the unity and integrity of church and state, without change or innovation. Mr. Perceval possessed a plenitude of this devotion, as a lawyer, and we are willing to believe, as a man: and therefore, in the essential point, was well fitted to be minister. He had not, from nature, the imposing preponderance of Pitt, but he possessed professional acuteness, personal perseverance, habits of business, and above all, that precious, religious zeal, approaching to the "*odium theologicum*," which best qualified him for the station he was chosen to occupy, and his character has perhaps been already summed up by those who employed him—that he was an able and willing little Minister.

There has also been an attempt to assassinate the character of the British government, in the correspondence disclosed by Henry, and laid by the President before the congress of the United States, which has ordered their publication, and appointed a committee with full powers to examine witnesses, and obtain the fullest ascertainment of the subject. The prime mover in the business, Sir James Craig, the British governor in Canada, is dead, and as dead men can give no testimony, and all farther elucidation on this side the Atlantic is prevented, by a refusal on the part of Ministry to publish the whole correspondence, it can only be observed that the executive power in America, conformed to its duty, in publishing those documents which the British government were at liberty to disavow or refute; that this attempt (to be believed, if not publicly and authoritatively dis-

avowed) to foment discontents, and and excite a party for the purpose of separating the United States, has in reality, consolidated them more strongly; that an expectation of hostility was no justification of such a treacherous correspondence, against the laws of nations, being carried on, during a period of actual peace, and amicable negotiation; and that had the separation actually taken place, in consequence of these acts of seduction, it is not improbable, that those very men who have declaimed against a French party in Ireland, would have thought it highly meritorious to have planted a British power in the centre of North-America.

A refusal of all redress, from public officers, or from public offices, has, in this instance also, produced a fatal catastrophe. Might it not be expedient to establish a permanent Court of Claims, whose proper business might be as a supplement to Chancery, to examine and decide on the justice of such applications, and thus deliver the public offices, and officers of government from the disagreeable, and even, as it has appeared, the dangerous necessity of repelling petitioners, often, no doubt, with gentleness, but sometimes with rudeness, and irritating deportment

We may observe, to the credit of a government really founded on the will of the people, how difficult it appeared for machinations such as those of Henry, (although no adventurer, and with respectable mercantile connexions,) to take any effect in such a society. He talks of his aims being lost and uncertain, "because the principal men derive their power from a giddy inconstant multitude, who always act inconsistently and absurdly," in this very abuse of his, acknowledging the soundness, and

incorruptibility of the people, and his despair of any success with those who depended on their will and opinion.

We may also observe that the Southern parts of the Union are most devoted to the constitution of their country, by being of an agricultural character. It is agriculture which ties men to their country by the heart-strings. Although he compliments the Northern States as "the bone and muscle" of America, yet he says, by being more addicted to commerce, they are, comparatively, less attached to the Union. Commerce weakens patriotism. Wherever our customers are, say the merchants, there is our country. *Ubi Pecunia, ibi Patria.* His country is his cargo; his heart moves from place to place with his hogsheads of sugar, and his bales of cotton. It has no home.

It is probably in consequence of the new irritation which Henry's disclosures have given to the United States, to the Democrats directly, and to the Federalists, desirous to free themselves of any accusation of being unfaithful to the Union, that an embargo has been laid in all the ports for 90 days, from the 4th of April: ending of consequence on the 2d of July, 1812; and commissioners are, in the mean time, to be sent to this country, which will bear the ultimatum of their own, and carry back that of the British government. In the attack upon Amelia Island, and East Florida, and in laying siege to St. Augustine, the executive of the United States has commenced hostilities, at least, against the remaining ally of Britain.

Sir Thomas Browne's prophecy seems to border upon its accomplishment, although modern prophecies are only to be deemed a sagacious

speculation into the consequences of things.

"When America shall cease to send forth its treasure,
"But employ it at home for American pleasure."

"That is," says Sir Thomas, in the year 1684, "when America shall be better civilized, new policed, and divided, it may come to pass that they will no longer suffer their treasure of gold and silver to be sent out to maintain the luxury of Europe and other parts, but rather employ it to their own advantages in great exploits and undertakings, magnificent structures, wars, or expeditions of their own.

"When the New World shall the Old invade,
"Nor count them their Lords, but their fellows in trade."

"That is," says Sir Thomas, "when America shall be so well peopled, civilized and divided into kingdoms, they are like to have so little regard of their originals as to acknowledge no subjection to them. They may also have a distinct commerce between themselves, or but independently with those of Europe, and may hostilely assault them, even as the Greek and Roman colonies after a long time dealt with their original countries."

The Catholics have been again repelled in their application to Parliament, although their question was introduced in both houses in a form least obnoxious to objection, and which probably had the effect of increasing the number who voted in their favour, viz. that a committee be appointed to take into consideration the laws imposing civil disabilities on his Majesty's subjects, professing the Catholic religion. Lord Donoughmore, in the upper-house, personated the Irish people well; in

his ardent display of the wrongs and of the rights of his countrymen, in his high and dignified rebuke of petulant interruption, and in his vehement and indignant invective against those instruments, sullen and secret, which obstinately obstructed the political redemption of Ireland, and consequent salvation of the Empire. Mr. Grattan, in the lower house, supported the same question, ('*pro more suo*,') with his usual acuteness of argument, point of period, and fervour of declamation.*

But, alas! may not an *Irishman* exclaim, in honest, though incongruous language. What a figure of speech in the debate, was the silence of Sheridan? He who used to say, "When you have taken arms from the people of Ireland, what are they to fight the enemy *with*? When you have taken the constitution from them, what are they to fight *for*? As it has been said, action was the first and second consideration, so I say, Ireland is the first, Ireland is the second, Ireland is now the only consideration." Was Mr. Sheridan indisposed in body, and could not therefore attend in his place? Might he not, in the words of the great Chatham, on the American question, might he not have "beseeched some kind hand to lay him down upon the floor of the house," for one sole purpose of raising his last and

* We have seen, and been seduced to read throughout, a quarto volume on the Life of Lord Charlemont, (an honest and amiable man,) by the pen of Mr. Francis Hardy; and have frequently traced with delight, through the heavy, colloquial composition, the brilliant style, and sparkling antithesis of Grattan, who (we know not whether in kindness, or cruelty to his friend) has imparted an unexpected vivacity and spirit to the *body* of the ponderous performance, much in the same way, as, it is said, that by the insertion of a little quick-silver, you can make the stiffest and most solid pudding dance upon the table.

warning voice against the insane and infatuated councils that are about once more to dispart the Empire? Was he indisposed in mind? No! It is impossible for human nature, inconsistent as it is, so to quarrel with itself. No! The very silence of Sheridan has in it an impassioned eloquence. How bitterly it complains of the compulsion of circumstances, the personal restrictions, the private obligations, that manacle his mind, pinion to the ground the eagle wing of genius, and lacerate the heart of the patriot-courtier. His silence seems to hold converse with his good and great friend, whom he is himself shortly to follow, that man

"Whose guardian angel called him home,
To save from evils yet to come!"

That friend was happy, "non tantum claritate vitæ, sed etiam opportunitate mortis," and we cannot forbear expressing our wonder, after such interesting and spirit-stirring scenes as we sometimes witness in the life of man, how poor is often the last act of the human drama.

Catholic emancipation is in accelerated progress, but still at considerable distance from the goal. Their cause has had the accession of some who had been inimical, and others who had been neutral, yet, notwithstanding, it may be collected, under all the present circumstances, that their seat in the temple of the Laws must be purchased (aye, purchased) at a certain price, by certain compromises and conditions—such as a Sidmouth may assent to, and a Canning may prescribe. Nothing on that side the channel is given gratuitously. Even Liberty itself must be the subject of truck and chaffer, and the constitution is to be weighed and measured out like so much corn, regulating liberty like their quatern loaf.

"To secure temporal supremacy for temporal purposes," said Lord Grenville, is all that can be desired, but there will be difficulties enow in settling the distinction, *practically*, between the spiritual and temporal supremacy, to give a pretence for delaying complete emancipation. In the mean time, it is likely, every endeavour will be made to dissociate the Catholic hierarchy from the laity, and particularly to place the episcopacy under the temporal supremacy of the administration of the day, paying them a royal bounty as servants of state, and by this means separating them from the people, under colour of relieving that same people from the burthen of supporting two orders of clergy.

We can see no reason to believe, that the ecclesiastical establishment of England is not as well secured by the mere oath of allegiance, in Ireland, as in *Scotland*; an oath which all Catholic Bishops must take before nomination, and which is a sufficient security for loyalty, without Veto, or what is meant to be made tantamount to a Veto, by preventing any one from acting in the episcopal capacity, without being thoroughly agreeable to the occasional minister; a *temporal supremacy*, that might perhaps often stand in the way of superior duties to God, to their country, and to themselves. Catholics place the spiritual supremacy in the Pope; the Presbyterians of Scotland in their General Assembly; the Protestant Dissenters in the New Testament itself; the people of England—Where? In the King, or in the Convocation, or in the Parliament? But wherever the ultimate jurisdiction in doctrine may be placed, all sects of christianity must acknowledge, that the pastoral charge, in all its gradations, is meant for the service of the people, not for purposes of personal ambition, pri-

vate emolument, or the interests of this or that political party.

We say, on the whole, as Charles Fox said, "I would have a Catholic to have as much power and as much influence in the empire as a Protestant. This I call Catholic emancipation. When you do not give them a right to become members of Parliament, you give them nothing. Whilst they are excluded from that house, they are not even virtually represented."

A debate upon the subject of Parliamentary reform ended, as it usually has done, with an *exhibition* of talents, and a large majority against the measure. The Hon. Robert Stewart was called up from history, as a witness in favour of reform, in the year 1793, as "having reprobated the little special pleading which had been used against the motion. A reformation in Parliament he held to be necessary. The present system of representation, he maintained, was defective, and he advised ministers to meet the question fairly and freely. For a reform in Parliament he would vote the money of his constituents, but he would not vote a shilling of it for the vices and follies of the government." We learned at school a maxim of old Thales, one of the wise men of Greece, viz.—*Similis tui sis*,—but Lord Castlereagh has probably forgot his Latin. Our summary of politics lies in a few words.—That to the want of a fair and pure representation of the people in Parliament, all our misfortunes at home and abroad are to be attributed. So we thought thirty years ago, and so we continue to think, with infinitely more reason, at the present day.

The present opposers of reform, had they lived in the days of Luther, would have equally opposed the reformation; or, in 1688, the revolu-

tion. It is a matter of regret, that the bulk of the people are so indifferent to this subject at present, but the cause may be easily explained. The tendency of public measures has been to depress the middling classes of society, and they have sunk under the system of terror, while the higher and monied classes have received temporary benefits from the extension of corrupt influence. Thus the people have sunk in the scale, and but little of a public feeling exists.

On the 18th of this month John Bellingham was executed for the atrocious murder of Spencer Perceval, first Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer; on the 11th inst. by shooting him in the lobby of the House of Commons. A species of insanity had warped this man's mind, so that the not receiving of satisfaction from the ministers for a supposed injury he had received in Russia, appeared in his perverted judgment a sufficient motive for committing the dreadful crime of assassination—a crime, which, in no possible case can admit of justification: for if private individuals assume the claim to execute judgment in their own cases, the blow of the assassin may be indiscriminately directed against the worst or the best man in the community. The assassin is, for the time being, and in the commission of the act, a ferocious despot, determining against the life of his fellow on his own act, and taking all power of judging, on himself, and this is the very essence of despotism. To the credit of the people of London few were hardy or base enough to give encouragement to the horrid crime, by some feeble attempts to huzza in his favour, when the unhappy delinquent was conveying to prison, and at the

awful season of his execution. The general sentiment was strongly expressive of detestation, although Spencer Perceval was peculiarly a most obnoxious, unpopular minister, especially at the present period of discontent arising from the badness of trade, justly attributable to the system of ministers, and when the people might be supposed to feel irritated at the misplaced munificence of parliament voting so large sums for his family, and in consequence, by a re-action of sentiment might feel themselves less disposed to be favourable to his memory. It is worthy of remark, that Bellingham was not a political reformer, nor did not belong to any of the classes now claiming a restoration of their rights from the legislature, and who, on that account are obnoxious to government, and their venal supporters. He was neither an Irish Catholic, a petitioner for the repeal of the Orders in Council, a discontented or distressed manufacturer, nor yet an advocate for parliamentary or economical reform. He was not a dissenter, nor a disciple of the new philosophy. If he had belonged to any of those reprobated classes, clamour would have resounded from shore to shore, and however unjust it is to attach blame from the misconduct of individuals to the party with whom they happen to be connected, it would have been said, that his misconduct arose from the erroneous principles of his party. He appears to have been a firm believer according to the utmost stretch of orthodox belief, and to have been well versed in all the mechanical exteriors of religion. He had no political bias, but revenge for supposed injuries by no means clearly proved to have been sustained, stimulated him to the

commission of the act. On this point an hereditary predisposition towards insanity, had perverted his judgment, and whenever the subject of his imprisonment in Russia was touched, the unhappy tendency of his mind was apparent, so as notwithstanding the enormity of his crime, almost to render him an object of compassion, and leave it doubtful, how far his conduct proceeded from the malevolence of his heart, or the hallucinations of insanity.

Remuneration has been given by Parliament to the family of the fallen minister. Lord Castlereagh, with the consent of the leaders of opposition, proposed £50,000 to the family, and an annuity of £2000 a-year to the widow. These votes passed unanimously; but some, either from a private understanding with ministers, or to appear to outstrip them in their zeal, have proposed an annuity of £1000 a-year to the eldest son, with an addition of another thousand after the decease of his mother, and that a monument, at the public expense, should be erected. These latter demands are encroachments on the generosity of the public. From the manner of his death, in sympathy with his afflicted family, probably few would have been dissatisfied with the grants as at first proposed, but when prodigality supersedes generosity, many will inquire, if in the present state of *British finance*, such profuse grants are not incommensurate with the means, and ask whether a highly taxed and greatly burdened people, can with justice afford to be still farther pressed down by an extravagant provision, for the family of a man, with whose administration of affairs many were dissatisfied, and the number of those thus thinking, daily increasing. Sentimentality, with an affected cant, assumes as a maxim,

not to speak ill of the dead. Justice, in her impartial distribution of rewards and censures, claims to speak of the dead, as they deserve, and refuses to admit the truth of a maxim which would level all distinctions between right and wrong. We have long been in the habit of censuring the conduct of Spencer Perceval, and there was nothing in the manner, even of his death, which ought to make us at once blind to his defects. Death left him in his moral and political character just as he was. We blamed a great part of his conduct before his death, and in defiance of any attempt to fix indelicacy on us, it is right to speak of him now as we think he deserves. Death ought not to be admitted as a plea to consecrate errors. To sum up his character in a few words, his religion appears to have been of that kind, which consists in a reliance on exteriors, intolerant towards others, when his worldly interests did not interfere, but very lax as to the regulation of his own conduct. His religion was not of that heaven-born species, which preserves its possessor from meanness, or compliance with vice, for the sake of private emolument. It did not stand in the way of his ambition, nor unfit him for being the supple, time-serving courtier, nor the unblushing, staunch advocate of corruption, under the vicious plea of state necessity. He would have been a suitable member of the society for the suppression of vice. Severe towards little offenders, he could, to retain his place and influence, become the apologist of vice, and use all his special pleading sophistry in the case of the Wardle investigation, to palliate the bare-faced profligacy of a commander-in-chief. He could, as counsel for the Princess of Wales, write a book on one side, and then in a change of circumstances, could, like Proteus, "frame his face to another oc-

casion." His religion was accomodating, and he found the means to make it the step-ladder to his ambition. In his politics, he was generally firm and decided on the side of power, and hence, with a certain class, and even with some of his opponents, obtained a character for sincerity, but it was the sincerity of blind obstinacy. Having once adopted a measure, he was slow of retiring, and pertinaciously clung to his errors, unless he found an appearance of concession might promote his views, and assist in retaining him in a situation, for which his abilities, which were of an inferior order, made him unfit. Posterity will award him a low-place in history, when the party-politics of the present day shall have subsided to their proper level, and when the ebullition of a highly commendable generous feeling, against the crime of assassination, shall have had time to settle into a deliberate judgment of his real merits.*

* The following lines on him are extracted from the *Morning Chronicle*.

In the dirge we sung o'er thee no censure
was heard,

Unembitter'd and free did the tear-drop
descend ;
We forgot, in that hour, how the states-
man had err'd,
And wept for the father, the husband,
and friend!

Oh! proud was the meed thy integrity
won,
And gen'tous indeed were the tears that
we shed,
When in grief we forgot all the ill thou
hadst done,
And tho' wrong'd by thee living, bewail'd
thee when dead!

Even now, if a selfish emotion intrude,
"Tis to wish thou hadst chosen some low-
lier state—
Hadst known what thou wert—and con-
tent to be *good*,
Hadst ne'er, for our ruin, aspir'd to be
great.

Among the Documents will be found some very interesting papers, which, as speaking a decided language on one side, do not usually find their way into our Northern prints. Three petitions from Liverpool, and the resolutions of the Livery of London at their anniversary dinner in favour of parliamentary reform, come under this description, as also a protest against the gold coin bill. We have also inserted the address of the Common Council of London, and the Prince Regent's answer, that although they are now in general circulation they may also stand as a record to future times. In the Prince's answer he refers to parliament, as the great council of the nation for the redress of grievances. From this quarter we see little hopes. The present constitution of national representation, is little calculated to make the House of Commons the echo of popular feeling. In the debate on the Tellerships of the Exchequer, increased lately beyond all reasonable bounds by the immense national expenditure, and thus adding to the fatal disease destined "to subdue at last," the statesmen on both sides of the house agreed in upholding their system of corruption, and in calling public plunder, private property. On those points, as well as on some of a similar nature formerly, Ponsonby and Castlereagh coalesce, and prove that on many subjects, the 11's and the ours are of one school. But the doctrine that possession confers right is fallacious in the extreme, and is a

case of casuistry which a poor thief might urge in vain at the Old Bailey. Tellers of the Exchequer, and all other public officers hold their emoluments from the public, subject to their revision and reform, and if from circumstances their fees become exorbitant, the legislature, as trustees for the public, ought to abridge them. But such doctrine suits not the views either of the possessors or expectants of places.

The riots continue in many parts of England, and that country appears in a very convulsed state. Riots are bad, against whatever side they are directed : but it is worthy of notice, that government condemn or connive at, riots, as they happen to be for or against them. They loudly declaim now against riots at Birmingham and Manchester, because the views of the rioters are opposed to them, but they who are accustomed to look back at the transactions of former days will find that the Church and King rioters of Birmingham, destroying the property of the virtuous Dr. Priestley, and the Manchester mob in 1792 and 1793, attacking Cooper, Walker, and other opposers of arbitrary power in that day, did not highly excite the indignation of the vigorous, or rigorous administration of Pitt and his colleagues. Now the tables are turned, and laws are enacted and enforced against rioters.

In the conduct of the present rioters, we can perceive no enlightened policy or sentiments of just political economy. Their blind opposition to machinery does not give a high opinion of their policy, or lead to any favourable hopes, that an opposition, conducted on such principles can be ultimately productive of good. In the course of their proceedings they have been guilty of some violent excesses, and in some

So, blest thro' their own little orb to move,
Thy years might have roll'd inoffensive away ;
Thy children might still have been blest with thy love,
And England would ne'er have been curst with thy sway !

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cases practised the horrid crime of assassination. In some instances as at Nottingham, they expressed a savage satisfaction at hearing of the murder of the Prime Minister. Surely the people of England with all their boasted improvements stand in need of being better instructed. Man in large manufactories is almost identified with the spindle, and requires to be raised to the rank of an intelligent intellectual being, so as to shake off his ignorance, the fruitful source of crimes. Government take this opportunity of extending the system of barracks, and Marybone is to afford a military fortification in the very metropolis, to overawe all tendency towards disaffection.* It would be better to

prevent crime by dispelling ignorance rather than by the rigid application of the sword or the halter :

not the means of preventing it, but must conform to the wishes of certain persons in a higher station." We shall speak our minds as fully on this occasion, as we hear our countrymen do elsewhere; and we believe the unvarnished truth to be, if the universal verdict of the nation upon Mrs. Clarke's affair had not been most insultingly reversed, this monstrous charge for the Barrack department, in the present year, would neither have been heard nor thought of. Four hundred pounds for the accommodation of a single dragoon and his horse! Thirty acres of land for a thousand of them! One hundred and seventy thousand pounds for the building of lodgings for 450 men! What an active warfare is some great commander carrying on against the finances of this country! He must unquestionably succeed in ruining it, if he be suffered to proceed at this rate. And is there no virtue, no public spirit, nay, no christian humanity, while the cries of want are ringing in our ears, to put a stop to this profligacy? The primary erection of barracks had already cost the country the enormous sum of fifteen millions; and it is in these times, when almost the whole of our army is abroad too, that the buildings raised by fifteen millions of pounds are found insufficient to lodge the army; and we are to have fresh barracks erected yearly at Bristol, in Mary-le-bone, at Liverpool, and probably all over the country where land can be got.

* The following paragraph, extracted from the *Times*, a paper generally subservient to the views of government, with the exception of an unfounded attack on Sir Francis Burdett, that true patriot and intrepid defender of the rights of the people, contains some good sentiments. The venal press occasionally discovers some symptoms of trimming round to the side of the people. Writers of this class will be ready to do so, if they think the people likely to become the strongest party.

" In a house consisting of 246 members, on Friday, Ministers had a majority of 22 upon the Barrack estimates. We confess, that, even with our predilection for their general system of policy, we should not have been sorry to have seen them defeated in a question like this: and such, it is generally thought, would have been the case, had it not been for the intemperate speech of Sir Francis Burdett, which drove some members from that side of the house. To us it appears astonishing, what motives men can have for supporting such profligate extravagance as has been yearly detected in this department, and was most strikingly and particularly proved to be attached to the estimates, while themselves are no participants in the gain. The solution, however, offered by Mr. John Smith, is probably the true one,—‘that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, however he might lament such profusion, had

" It will be observed, that throughout the continuance of the unhappy disturbances in the country, we have never said one word that could be tortured into any extenuation of the offence of the rioters: for we know that when insubordination once commences it must be suppressed by force; and men who are engaged in the work of destruction, no matter whether it be that of their fellow-subjects' property or persons, may be justly repressed at the expence of their own destruction. But if this is no time for confession, surely it is none for provocation. While the common people are obliged, from the circumstance of the times, to suffer privations, is it wise to provide for the soldiery at such a rate, that the lodging of one man and his horse will cost more than would procure habita-

and before severity is resorted to, examination should be made into the causes of the grievances of which they complain. To lighten their burdens by a wise policy and a change of measures, as far as circumstances will permit, and thus to ameliorate their condition, would be an act of the most substantial wisdom, as well as of justice imperatively demanded of the legislature in the present crisis.

The examination of witnesses against the Orders in Council, at the bars of both houses of Parliament, will be likely to be of service, by demonstrating the impolicy of Stephen's commercial system of war. He is indignant at the interference of the people against his favourite measure, and like other advocates of power, treats the people with contempt, as not being competent judges of the mysteries of government. It may, however, be found in the end, that the weavers, manufacturers, and merchants of England, understand the principles of trade, and of a *just and sound policy also*, better than the lawyers and civilians, who have wrought themselves into high offices, to the injury of the community. The good effects of the public voice being exerted, may be seen by the concessions forced on government by the numerous petitions presented against the Orders in Council, and may encourage, on other occasions, to bring forward an explicit declaration of the public will. These petitions led to the present examinations, which, it is hoped, may terminate in the abrogation of the pernicious system of the Orders in Council, and the immoral traffic of the evasions prac-

tions for eight poor families? But, in truth, the soldiers want no such thing; they are the unconscious objects of the extravagance?"

ticed by the mode of licences. The official declaration now made by the French, that the Berlin and Milan decrees are repealed, as far as the United States of America are concerned, may probably hasten the downfall of our hostile orders, and be a step towards producing a reconciliation, at least for the present, with America.

As a feeble attempt to palliate the present commercial distress, a plan has been set on foot, under the patronage of the Duke of York, for the relief of the distressed manufacturers and labouring poor in certain of the manufacturing districts. It is a bad debasing policy, to give, under the name of alms, those wages which, under a proper system, would be due to the labourer. Well may the manufacturers exclaim, "Retain your gifts, but give us back the trade you have injured by your unwise policy, and your pernicious Orders in Council."

THE HIGH PREROGATIVE MINISTRY did not long survive their late head. After an attempt to get the Marquis of Wellesley and George Canning to join, they were forced to resign, on finding a majority of the house of Commons against them. It is natural to feel a transient glow of satisfaction at their being displaced: for they appear, including their late head, to have been the chosen fit instruments for continuing that system, which for the last 50 years has tended towards absolute power; and this pliability was probably the chief recommendation, which enabled them to keep in office. Thus the prerogative ministry, as in 1806, are once more out of office, for the late ministers are of the true Pittite school; but a little reflection restores us to our senses, and we see little cause for exultation. There is no probability, during the present system of corruption, that even a

set of ministers, virtuous on principle, could effect, or would be allowed to do much substantial good, for it is to be feared, that the vices of the system would soon swallow up the virtues of the man. Charles Fox, when in office, never realized the fond hopes he excited as a virtuous oppositionist. A radical change of measures is wanting, and as a grand restorative, a Parliamentary reform appears alone able to give soundness to the body. The Marquis of Wellesley affords small hopes, that under his system, we shall materially better our condition. He requires an increased force on the Peninsula, and consequently an increased expenditure. The finances of Britain present the most vulnerable point, and increasing demands on them, only tend to hasten the crisis of that bankruptcy, which cannot be contemplated without the most awful sensations.

Of our foreign affairs, little new can be said. The war in the Peninsula is occasionally attended with some bright successes, which only flatter, so as probably to lead to ruin. After all the great boasts, it appears to be the highest praise, that the British have not been beaten as they were as far advanced three years ago, as they are at the present day, after all the loss of lives, and the waste of money, which have attended a long protracted and ineffectual warfare.

Whether the meeting of the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander will be portentous, from their hostility, or their temporary accommodation, remains yet doubtful. In either case, a farther accession to the power of France is probable.

In the North of Europe, the French are advancing with rapidity to the frontiers of Russia, having previously occupied all the important fortresses of Prussia, and its King, be-

ing therefore virtually dethroned. The two Emperors of France and Russia have set out from their respective capitals, either to head their armies, in the event of a war, or, which appears most probable, to enter, under the mediation of Austria, into a more exact execution of the Continental exclusion, as far as relates to the *Baltic*, which will probably be called the treaty of Dresden, and form a more public exposition of the compact entered into at Tilsit. We are very incredulous of any war taking place between Russia and France, for although England be the best consumer of Russian commodities, and therefore no doubt retains a powerful influence in the councils of that empire, by its commercial, as well as political, connexions with the great men, whose revenues depend, so much, upon an intercourse with Britain; yet the French party always appears predominant, and the recent experience of French hostility, will indispose Russia to a renewal of war, to be waged on the borders of the Vistula, the Niemen, or the Dvina, while her armies are still opposed to the Turks upon the Danube. We should suspect, that, under all this mutual preparation for war, the event will be a more explicit maritime treaty, ratifying the treaty of Utrecht, by a solemn adhesion of the continent to the code it promulgates, as to a common law of nations; and defining the right of neutrals, in respect to the flag covering the merchandize, on the ocean, until it be subjected to the municipal regulations of the state which the Neutral may have entered.

In the South of Europe, it is likely that the war will be decided in the Peninsula, as soon as matters are accommodated with Russia, and the balance will be suspended by the hostile armies, until the modern

Brennus is at leisure to throw his own sword into his own scale. It has never been particularly observed how singularly useful the Irish soldiery have been in this war. The Irish are, without any distinction, deemed by the Portuguese and Spaniards of their own religion. Whatever is Irish, is Roman Catholic, and hence the odium and repulsion against heretics which still operates against the English, even though allies, have no effect with respect to the Irish, whom they consider as brothers and friends. Hence Lord Wellington chose St. Patrick's day for assault, a saint whom our allies greatly revere, although they say that he must have been a good deal addicted to the bottle.

CORRESPONDENCE ON THE SUBJECTS
CONNECTED WITH THE RETROSPECT.

UNDER this head, we are desirous to encourage communications from correspondents, giving authenticated accounts of the transactions in our own country, which, except through this channel, and occasionally through the Dublin papers, might not reach the public view. The transactions at Clare, Banford Green, and other places, in relation to the opposition to the Protestant petition, have been by us only exhibited through the medium of the Northern press, as it is the timid policy of our Newspapers, to preserve a silence on those subjects, which being so interesting, require to be generally known. Thus the people are often ignorant of important events, happening in their own province, and within a few miles of their residence.

On the suggestion of our correspondent A.Z., the Statute-book has been examined, and the following act of the Irish Parliament will be

an answer to his inquiry, and show how far the test laws are repealed in Ireland.

19TH AND 20TH OF GEO. III. CHAP. 6.

“ An Act for the Relief of his Majesty's faithful Subjects, the Protestant Dissenters of this Kingdom, and to repeal a Clause in the Act of the Second of Queen Anne, intituled, An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery, as far as the same relates to the Protestant Dissenters.

“ Whereas, by an act made in this kingdom in the second year of the reign of her late Majesty Queen Anne, intituled, An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery; it is amongst other things enacted, that all and every person and persons that shall be admitted, entered, placed, or taken into any office or offices, civil or military, or shall receive any pay, salary, fee, or wages, belonging to or by reason of any office or place of trust, by reason of any patent or grant from her Majesty, or shall have any command or place of trust, from or under her Majesty, or any of her predecessors or successors, or by her or their authority, or by any authority derived from her or them, within this realm of Ireland, shall receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the usage of the Church of Ireland, within three months after his or their admittance into or receiving the said authority and employments, in some public church upon the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, immediately after divine service and sermon: be it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that all and every person or persons, being Protestants, shall and may have, hold and enjoy any office or offices, civil or military, and receive any pay, salary, fee or wages belonging to or by reason of such office or place, notwithstanding he shall not receive or have received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as in the said recited clause is prescribed, without incurring any of the penalties in said act, or any other act enacted for or in neglect of receiving the same.”